PRIMARY CONCERNS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

presented to the

Interdepartmental Committee

on Youth Services

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New Brunswick

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New Brunswick

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PART ONE

PRIMARY CONCERNS OF THE YOUTH COUNCIL OF NEW BRUNSWICK

I - SERVICE NEEDS OF AT-RISK YOUTH

In March 1989, the Youth Council wrote a brief to summarize its concerns regarding protection and health services to youth. The document was presented and discussed with the Minister and senior management personnel of the Department of Health and Community Services in April and August 1989. The following recommendations were excerpted from this document:

1. Young people having left home either because of difficult family situations, alcohol or drug problems, sexual or physical abuse, or for other reasons, often find themselves with no place to go, unaware of the services that might be available to them. Those 16 to 18 years of age and not under the care of the Minister of Health and Community Services prior to their 16th birthday are not provided for under the Family Services Act. The unfortunate result of this is that these young people are often left to their own resources and fall through the cracks of the system. In desperate circumstances, this can lead to prostitution and other forms of exploitation. **We recommend that amendments be brought to the Family Services Act to include provisions for youth 16-18 years of age and that the appropriate services be created to adequately provide for this group.**

2. **We recommend that services for this age group including shelter, counselling, financial assistance, life skills training, and others deemed appropriate be developed and implemented by the Department of Health and Community Services and the Department of Income Assistance in conjunction with community-based organizations.**

II - YOUTH STRATEGY

1. Unemployment figures for youth are generally double those for the general population. Since the creation of the Canada - New Brunswick Youth Strategy, a number of initiatives have been put in place to begin addressing the employment needs of young people throughout the province. We strongly support such efforts and **recommend that energies continue to be concentrated on finding a solution to the problem of youth unemployment and that areas such as apprenticeship, job entry and work/study programs be further studied and promoted. We also recommend that the particular needs of native people and of other minorities be addressed.**

III - HUMAN RIGHTS

In a presentation to the Office of the Ombudsman in June of 1989, the Youth Council made the following recommendations regarding the rights of New Brunswick youth.

We recommend:

1. **that section 2 of the Act be amended by striking the definition of age and that a section be added to read:**

> **The <u>New Brunswick Human Rights Act</u> guarantees the rights and freedoms set out in it subject only to such reasonable limits prescribed by law as can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society.**

IV. STUDENT-AID

1. **The Student Aid program in its present form is not currently accessible to all young New Brunswickers. We have identified eight key areas needing to be addressed and, further, we recommend that an overall review of the program be undertaken.**

V - YOUTH HOUSES

1. Youth need a place where they can gather, become involved and informed and where they can participate in activities. Accessible counselling services on career options and on personal problems are also in demand. Alcohol and drug use is often the result of boredom, a panacea for the lack of recreational programs and facilities for young people. A non-alcoholic Youth House offering a variety of services and activities, at all times accessible, particularly evenings and weekends, would be an ideal way to answer these needs. **We recommend that the provincial government develop a policy in this area and that all levels of government cooperate to assist young people in the creation of Youth Houses (Maisons de jeunes) in both small and large communities across the province.**

VI - NATIVE AND ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

1. Native and aboriginal youth in New Brunswick face particular hardships; they suffer higher unemployment rates, greater substance abuse problems and often, a lower standard of living than do other sectors of our population. Solutions must be found to these problems. We recognize the difficulties presented by the complex division of powers and responsibilities between provincial, federal and band governments but **we urge the New Brunswick government, in participation with native and aboriginal youth, to assist in the development and implementation of programs to alleviate the severity of the situation.**

VII - COUNSELLING SERVICES FOR YOUTH

1. The Council recognizes the need for an increase in and improvement of services to youth. We are also concerned that youth are very often unaware of those services and programs that do exist. **We recommend that measures be taken to make youth better aware of the services and programs available to them (i.e. career and emotional counselling, emergency shelters, transition houses, employment opportunities, etc...). A directory of "Youth Services" made available to youth and youth organizations could be a useful tool for the dissemination of information.**

PART TWO

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS
MADE BY THE YOUTH COUNCIL OF N.B. SINCE ITS INCEPTION

I - HEALTH

a) LEGISLATION and SERVICES

A SUMMARY OF CONCERNS REGARDING PROTECTION AND HEALTH SERVICES TO YOUTH - March 1989, presented and discussed with the Minister and senior management personnel of the Department of Health and Community Services in April and August 1989. Note: Some of these recommendations were extracted from the document:
- NOBODY'S CHILDREN: a brief prepared by the Youth Council of N.B. in response to the Green Paper on the Family Services Act - October 1988.

1. Young people having left home either because of difficult family situations, alcohol or drug problems, sexual or physical abuse, or for other reasons, often find themselves with no place to go, unaware of the services that might be available to them. Those 16 to 18 years of age and not under the care of the Minister of Health and Community Services prior to their 16th birthday are not provided for under the Family Services Act. The unfortunate result of this is that these young people are often left to their own resources and fall through the cracks of the system. In desperate circumstances, this can lead to prostitution and other forms of exploitation. **We recommend that amendments be brought to the Family Services Act to include provisions for youth 16-18 years of age and that the appropriate services be created to adequately provide for this group.**

2. **We recommend that the Lieutenant-Governor in Council make a regulation prescribing that the age group composed of those between, and including, 16 and 18 years of age be included in the definition of "child in-care" in the Family Services Act Regulations.**

3. **We recommend that services for this age group including shelter, counselling, financial assistance, life skills training, and others deemed appropriate be developed and implemented by the Department of Health and**

Community Services and the Department of Income Assistance in conjunction with community-based organizations.

4. **We recommend that a Youth Client Group be created within the Department of Health and Community Services.** With the recognition of this age group as a distinct population, necessary services designed to meet the special needs of youth can be made more readily available. **We recommend that all social services provided to this age group be under the administrative responsibility of an Office of Youth Services and, when numbers permit, that youth client cases be placed under the responsibility of one regional case worker and not divided between several staff members.**

5. **We recommend that 24 hour emergency shelters be introduced using new facilities or creating spaces in existing ones to meet the needs of homeless youth. Services provided by such shelters would include crisis counselling, information on alternatives to running away, assistance in the application and assessment process for financial aid, follow-up counselling, life-skills courses, and other appropriate services.**

6. **We recommend that adequate resources be provided to the Alcohol and Drug Dependency Commission to develop and provide services specific to youth between the ages of 15-24.**

7. **We recommend that special emphasis be placed on developing and providing services to youth in the newly created N.B. Mental Health Commission.**

8. **We recommend that the Department of Health and Community Services develop a long term service plan for this age group including counselling services and residential facilities.** This should be done in consultation with non governmental organizations and community agencies interested in the welfare of youth.

9. It is a reality that young people are becoming sexually active at an early age, thus exposing themselves to serious and even fatal sexually transmitted diseases such as AIDS. Since young people are making the decision to

become sexually active, they must be given every opportunity to protect themselves. **We therefore recommend that administrators within the education system seriously consider the instalment of condom vending machines in high schools as well as post-secondary institutions throughout New Brunswick.**

I - b) INCOME ASSISTANCE

To the Minister of Income Assistance in September 1988, during discussions concerning policy changes affecting post-secondary students.

1. **The Youth Council recommends that a list of expenses (not exclusive) for which a client may claim additional benefits be drawn up and distributed to Income Assistance clients enroled in post-secondary studies in receipt of a student loan.**

2. **We recommend that an advisory committee to the Minister be created to review any changes relating to students with respect to Income assistance policy and programs.**

I - c) FOSTER HOME / CARE

1. **The Youth Council recommends that the Department of Health and Community Services ensure that youth in care receive the counselling they need to help them overcome the emotional trauma they may have experienced from the causes of their entering into care, and the disruption in their lives caused by placement away from their natural family.**

2. In order to insure that placement can be sustained in cases where adolescents are experiencing emotional conflicts, **we recommend that the Department of Health and Community Services provide counselling and a**

skills management program that encourages youth to work out their problems with their foster family before family breakdowns occur, because the experience of recurring placements in several foster homes brings about more discontinuity and uncertainty which serves to compound the emotional and behavioral problems of youth with each new placement.

3. We recommend that extended care and maintenance benefits be made accessible to all youth upon termination of their care status and that these benefits be based on a guaranteed minimum income level. We also recommend that return to foster family placement be made possible if agreed to by the ward and family and in that event, that maintenance payments be reinstated to the foster family.

4. We recommend that social worker case loads be strictly limited to ensure quality service delivery to youth in care and to foster families.

5. We recommend that, barring unforeseeable circumstances, a permanent relationship be established with one caseworker from the onset of care. With this, a youth will have at least one permanent attachment on which he / she can to some degree depend.

6. We recommend that each ward maintain a formal and ongoing link with their caseworker for a minimum period of two years, or to age 21, following their exit from the care system.

7. We recommended that prior to their leaving care, and on an ongoing basis, each youth in care receive in depth independent living preparation including: social/interpersonal skills training; practical life skills training; completion of high school or G.E.D.; employment search skills. Additionally, it would be important to establish familiarity with community support systems and community social agencies in order that the youth have a network through which they might find assistance independently.

8. We recommend that special training or counselling be made available to assist care givers and case workers to understand and to learn how to deal with

youth who are experiencing emotional and behavioral problems, and that updating of this training be made available on an ongoing basis.

9. We recommend that the rate structure for foster care providers be carefully reviewed by The Task Force on Family Services to ensure that amounts meet the levels necessary for providing adequate care, shelter, food, clothing and allowances to foster care children.

10. We recommend that the Department of Health and Community Services assist in the establishment and support of local chapters of the National Youth in Care Network operated for and by youth and in of a provincial body to assure communication between these groups, and between youth in care and government.

I - d) FAMILY VIOLENCE

The Interdepartmental Committee on Family Violence - August 1989
Concerning the "Action Plan":

1. We feel that the category "children" is very broad and consideration should be given to distinguishing between young children and adolescents. The needs of these two groups can differ significantly because of their age and maturity and services must be designed to meet their distinct requirements.

2. In addition, the Family Services Act excludes those youths 16-18 from protection and because of this, these young people are provided with a restricted level of service. They are eligible to receive income assistance if they meet the criteria established by the Department of Health and Community Services, have a permanent address and an approved living situation. No counselling or shelter is provided. Measures must be taken to correct this situation. If we do not clearly identify the differences in services available under this category, we may once more overlook the need for an increase in and improvement of intervention, support, and assistance for youth 16-18. For these young people who may be currently living independently, having escaped situations of violence or sexual abuse,

income assistance and transient emergency shelters are not enough. **These youth need counselling, life skills training, someone with whom to share the trauma and to rely upon.**

3. Where the category of children is used in the Action Plan, it is not specified whether individuals must be themselves victims of abuse to access counselling or if witnesses to abuse will also receive services. **We would recommend that both be included and that this be specified.** The witness of violence can suffer feelings of guilt, fear and powerlessness which need to be dealt with. In addition, situations will occur where a child/youth will report previously undisclosed sexual or physical abuse once removed from the abusive situation. Disclosure is only likely to happen if attention and counselling are provided to the child through peer group counselling sessions or personal counselling. This should continue through the three phases of intervention: crisis, stabilization, re-establishment.

4. With respect to re-establishment, there is mention of the importance of self-help groups and support groups. **There exists in Canada an organization called the National-Youth-In-Care-Network, a support group for children and youth who have been or are in-care, where they can share experiences and offer mutual support. Currently, no chapter of this organization exists in New Brunswick.** There is much potential for departmental support in the establishment of this organization in the province. It could form an integral part of services for youth who are in care because of abuse or for other reasons.

5. Youth in crisis are often unaware of what services and assistance are available to them. **There exists the need for promotion of services to those groups most likely to need them, children and youth in particular. The provincial telephone number for twenty-four hour assistance must be made more available to youth in the school system, where most remain until the age of 16.**

6. Reporting abuse or neglect is a difficult step to take. Given their lack of independence, children or youth may feel incapable of disclosing because

of fear of repercussions from the other parent, because of guilt feelings about aggravating family problems or increasing the burden already carried by the abused parent. **We would like to underline the importance of a mandatory program in the public school system dealing with family violence issues and services for the abused child or youth.**

Policy and Directions Document:

7. In the order of priority placed on components in addressing family violence (as listed in the document prepared for the Policy and Priorities Committee) **the Youth Council would recommend that Service and Delivery be placed ahead of Standards and Training or that they be assigned equal priority.**

Health Legislation:

8. Services to the 16-18 year old group are currently inadequate and offer little potential for intervention. Under the regulations to the Family Services Act, this age group is denied the services which would make successful intervention and re-establishment possible, such as counselling, shelter, and education opportunities. **In any effort to co-ordinate and improve response to family violence, serious attention will need to be paid to meeting the needs of those youth in this age group. This will include long-term suitable housing arrangements such as group homes and foster care as well as new initiatives such as youth co-operative housing for those ready and able to live independently. Changes to the Family Services Act Regulations will be necessary to allow for intervention and provision of services.**

II - ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

1. Although the causes and circumstances surrounding substance abuse by young people can differ quite sharply from those of older people, there is currently no youth specific program for treatment and counselling used throughout the province. **We recommend that a program for treatment and counselling of alcohol and drug addiction be designed and implemented to meet the particular needs of youth 15-24.**

2. A major cause of drug and alcohol use among youth is peer pressure. Peer counselling and education programs are proving to be extremely effective in dealing with many different types of problems in both Canada and abroad. **We recommend that funds be made available for continued research and development of peer counselling and education programs and to sustain those programs already demonstrating their success in provincial schools and post-secondary institutions.**

3. An observation heard over and over in the high schools we visited was the ease with which drug pushers continue to ply their trade within the school. **We recommend that standardized program of cooperation involving students, teachers, parents and local police forces be developed to eradicate drugs in New Brunswick schools.**

4. Although smoking among young people is on the decline, statistics show that it continues to be a matter for concern, particularly with regards to young women. **We must continue to make young people aware of the health risks of tobacco use. We recommend that programs and promotional campaigns to discourage smoking and the use of tobacco products receive increased support from the government.**

III - HUMAN RIGHTS

Excerpted from the document:

THE NEW BRUNSWICK HUMAN RIGHTS ACT AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR YOUTH - June 1989, presented to the Office of the Ombudsman in June 1989.

We recommend:

1. **that section 2 of the Act be amended by striking the definition of age and that a section be added to read:**

> **The New Brunswick Human Rights Act guarantees the rights and freedoms set out in it subject only to such reasonable limits prescribed by law as can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society.**

2. **that the Human Rights Commission and the Office of the Ombudsman further their efforts with respect to the education of young persons in the school system of their rights and freedoms.**

3. **that the Human Rights Commission and the Office of the Ombudsman investigate the gap in legislation in the Family Services Act and its Regulations which causes iniquities in the provision of services to youth 16-18 inclusive, and as a result discriminates against them on the grounds of age.**

IV - RECREATION

1. Youth need a place where they can gather, become involved and informed and where they can participate in activities. Accessible counselling services on career options and on personal problems are also in demand. Alcohol and drug use is often the result of boredom, a panacea for the lack of recreational programs and facilities for young people. A non-alcoholic Youth House offering a variety of services and activities, at all times accessible, particularly evenings and weekends, would be an ideal way to answer these needs. **We recommend that the provincial government develop a policy in this area and that all levels of government cooperate to assist young people in the creation of Youth Houses (Maisons de jeunes) in both small and large communities across the province.**

2. A lack of facilities is often a barrier for providing recreational activities to the community. This is particularly a problem in rural areas of the province. **We recommend that school facilities in all school districts be utilized to their maximum potential to provide recreation and leisure activities for youth.**

3. **We recommend that the Advisory Committee on Sports and Recreation currently being developed by the Department of Tourism, Recreation and Heritage include youth representation to insure that the needs, views and insight of youth are brought up for discussion.**

4. The organization of youth activities depends greatly on volunteer commitment from adults and youth. Although several programs exist to train, place and reward volunteers, they are not extensive enough to meet the need. More recruitment, training and support are necessary to build a self-replenishing pool of volunteers who can meet the demand for recreational activities; therefore, **we recommend that paid co-ordinators be provided across the province to assist in the development and implementation of a Volunteer Recruitment/Support Program.**

5. During the tour, complaints were heard throughout the province over the

shortage of recreation programming and activities for youth. Young people also expressed their desire for activities other than sports. **We recommend that municipalities and the provincial government cooperate in developing and offering more youth-specific programming and that the government allocate funds to municipalities for the hiring of youth program co-ordinators.**

V - EDUCATION

a) GENERAL

1. Young people must be prepared for independent living and for their entry into the labour force. **We recommend the implementation of a mandatory life skills course at the high school level (in conjunction with semestering) to cover such topics as the transition from school to work; job seeking skills; alcohol and drug abuse; sex education, sexuality and family planning; consumer and financial skills; the importance of fitness and of an active lifestyle; services and programs available to youth; legal rights; and other relevant topics.**

2. Youth from multi-cultural groups expressed their concern regarding the amount of discrimination and prejudice that continues to exist in our society. Youth is a period of growth, learning and self-realization; it is during these years that many of our opinions and attitudes about ourselves and our world are shaped. **We recommend that the high school curriculum be revised to include more emphasis on the history of our native peoples, the role of women in New Brunswick history, and on our multi-cultural heritage to promote greater understanding and tolerance among our peoples. We also recommend that workshops be provided to the province's teachers to help them better understand the needs and differences of multi-cultural youth.**

3. The relative value of a high school diploma is no longer as great as it has been in the past, but its importance cannot be undervalued. Unemployment figures for those without a secondary education are significantly higher than for those having completed a minimum of grade 12. Currently, there is no program of early identification and intervention within the provincial school system to prevent at risk students from dropping out. In addition, no guidelines or provisions exist for follow-up or counselling for students who do drop out. In order to lessen the need for remedial or social assistance programs to address the problem of early school leavers, **we recommend that special emphasis be placed on the development and**

implementation of early intervention programs. We also recommend that a system of follow-up and counselling be implemented to provide alternatives for those young people who leave school.

4. Due to both social and educational pressures, the return to high school for those who have dropped out is a difficult one. The current system of reintegration does not incorporate a review of material or provide for an upgrading of skills. Returning students are either placed in a regular classroom at the level they had attained prior to leaving, or, depending on age and previous standing, are advanced to a grade 10 classroom. In face of this, the odds raised against the student are high. **We recommend that the reintegration process for early school leavers resuming their studies be examined and that the necessary changes be brought to ease the difficulty of the transition including skills upgrading, follow-up counselling, and enrichment courses.**

5. Youth who participated in the Youth Council Tour expressed their concern that they were not consulted with regards to educational reform. Most described the current academic (or college prep) program as too limiting; students wishing to further their educations are left with very little room in their curriculum for electives. Many students also expressed a need for less segregation between academic, commercial and industrial stream students which they believe contributes to the labelling and discrimination which currently exists. The freedom to explore and move more freely between academic and vocational courses might help to alleviate this problem. **We recommend that high school students be involved in the discussions on education reform and that a well designed semestering system be adopted throughout the province in both anglophone and francophone school districts.**

6. Teacher evaluation is also of great concern to young people in New Brunswick. The current system of evaluation consists of having a member of the administration "sit-in" on a few classes given by an instructor. This is deemed inadequate because it creates an artificial situation; it does not accurately reflect the reality of the unsupervised classroom. **We recommend**

that a system be developed at the high school level to insure that teacher evaluation is done with serious consideration of student input. We also recommend that teachers participate in regular upgrading workshops to bring them up to date in teaching techniques and on current youth issues.

7. Students have expressed the need for greater availability of guidance counselling and counselling services in general. The ages between 15 and 24 are a time of great intellectual and emotional change. Uncertainty about the future, great pressures to define their career goals, the struggle to develop individuality in the face of peer pressure to conform, and problems arising from strained family relationships can often lead to emotional problems such as depression and suicide, alcohol and drug abuse, and a loss of self-esteem. The availability of good counselling is a pressing need. **We recommend that the Department of Education in cooperation with all school districts reevaluate current counselling services and make the necessary changes to insure that comprehensive services and up to date information are readily available to all students.**

8. In many anglophone school districts where we met with groups of students there was great dissatisfaction voiced over French second language education. This centered on both teacher qualification and on curriculum content. Many students expressed their frustration at being taught by teachers who were grappling with the language themselves and their disappointment over the low level of speaking skills and comprehension that they acquired during the course of their studies. The Department of Education has announced an extensive review of curriculum, including that for second language education. **We recommend that second language education programs not only be reviewed, particularly those for French as a second language, but that proficiency levels for teachers be strictly regulated.**

9. The suspension policy in most schools in the province currently consists of having a student removed from school premises for a designated amount of time. Many of the youth we consulted with were of the belief that this does not often lead to a change in behaviour or motivation but is viewed as a

holiday and enjoyed as such. **The idea of an "in-house" suspension program which would see a student separated from the rest of the student population, but kept within the school and required to continue his or her studies under special supervision would be an improvement to the existing system. We recommend that such a program or policy be standardized and instated across the province.**

10. During the provincial tour, N. B. Community College students from many parts of the province made presentations to the Council. One of the three main points raised during each of these presentations was the need for affordable day-care facilities on college premises for single parents attending or planning to attend courses. A service of this kind could greatly relieve some of the burdens of pursuing studies and raising a family. Assisting single parents to improve their marketability can only reduce their dependence on income assistance. It must be noted that a similar need exists in the province's universities. **We recommend that the integration of day-care services into post-secondary education facilities be studied and an action plan developed.**

11. Community College students voiced their dissatisfaction concerning their lack of input in the evaluation of their instructors. Like high school students, they feel they have an important contribution to make in the assessment of their teachers. **We recommend that a system for gathering and utilizing student input in instructor evaluations be developed and implemented throughout the community college system.**

12. Community College student union representatives from throughout the province expressed the need for a one-week mid-winter break to be included in their school year calendar. Full-time studies pose heavy demands and the need for a period of rest in mid-winter to improve morale and provide uninterrupted study time before spring exams has been recognized by the Department of Education and by almost all post-secondary institutions in the province. However, the Community College system does not provide for such a break. **We recommend that the Department of Advanced Education and Training include a one week break in February or March of the**

Community College calendar to allow students a period of rest and study.

13. The Youth Council of New Brunswick recommends **that all forms of religious instruction be removed from the public school system during educational exercises or associated activities.**

14. An issue raised in many areas of the province is that of overcrowding on school buses. It is not unusual to see three students on a seat designed for two people and or standees at the back of the bus. Students are concerned with the possible threat to their safety. We recommend that legislation be passed requiring that seat belt use become mandatory on school buses, imposing a limit of two passengers per seat and prohibiting standees.

15. During the tour, many young people in the province voiced concerns about the need for better education on nutrition and stricter controls over the foods offered in the school. **We recommend that school cafeterias be prohibited from serving, on a daily basis, deep fried foods and high calorie/low nutrition foods. These could be offered occasionally as a supplement to a well balanced menu.**

V - b) STUDENT-AID

1. The cost of living increases on a regular basis, but loans and bursaries don't keep up. **We recommend that the Student Aid Program be modified to ensure that allowable costs are brought up to agree with the actual costs as provided by post-secondary institutions.**

2. **We recommend that the actual format of the Canada Student Loan and New Brunswick Bursary Program remain the foundation upon which additional programs are developed.**

3. **We recommend that the province of New Brunswick develop a New Brunswick Student Loan Program.**

4. **We recommend that repayments to the New Brunswick Student Loan Program be tied to the income tax process at a fixed percentage in income.**

5. **We recommend that the New Brunswick Student Loan and Bursary Program be developed for part time students.**

6. Parents or spouses of some students do not or cannot make financial contributions, therefore a safety net should exist for students in this situation. **We recommend that a specific bursary program be established to assist single parents, married students and dependent students whose family parental-spousal contributions is assessed at 0.** In cases where previously assessed parental contributions are reneged, **we recommend that the system rather than the student, be charged with the responsibility of ensuring that parental contributions are collected and made to the student.**

7. Scholarships, bursaries and fellowships: Scholarships, etc. exceeding a total of $ 600 are calculated as resources and deducted from provincial bursary (or loan if they do not receive a bursary). Students showing talent and initiative are penalized for their efforts. Students who receive other awards exceeding this amount will often not receive New Brunswick bursary and / or receive a reduced student loan while <u>those who have not shown academic excellence and scholastic achievement will not be penalized</u>. There is a certain unfairness in this policy and achievers are receiving less financial encouragement from the government in the pursuit of post-secondary studies than are average students. In view of this, **we recommend that loan and bursary should be calculated separately, then the award deducted from the loan portion of assistance.** This would allow gifted and hard-working students to receive no less of a bursary than they would be eligible for if they had not earned a scholarship, etc.

8. With regard to the Student Loan Rebate Program, after 4 years, the student with an accumulated loan of over $ <u>8,000</u> (a maximum of $ 13,200) can have up to 25 % forgiven from their loan, (or brought to a minimum of $ 8,000). Students attending a 3 year program such as those at N.B. Craft School, an institution run by the provincial government, are not eligible for

a rebate. A student receiving the maximum level of loan for 3 years can accrue a loan of $ 9,900. The $ 1,900 necessary to bring it down to $ 8,000 amounts to 19.2 %. **We recommend that students who are enroled in a 3 year program be eligible for a rebate under the loan rebate program.**

V - c) INTEGRATION

INTEGRATION: FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF YOUTH - September 1989, presented to the Special Committee on Social Policy Development Sub-Committee on Integration.

1. **We recommend that clear guidelines and criteria be developed, equally applicable to all schools in the province, regardless of language of instruction or of location in the province, to assist in determining levels of intervention for special needs students and listing acceptable alternatives to full integration when this is not possible.** These guidelines should be developed in consultation with the Department of Education: Anglophone/Francophone sectors, school districts, teachers, students, and appropriate community groups.

2. **We recommend that any process designed to determine placement of a student require active involvement by that student. We also recommend that students be consulted in choosing or designing any alternative programs to regular classroom instruction and that their wishes be taken into consideration.**

3. **We recommend that both linguistic sectors of the Department of Education work cooperatively to develop a policy statement and implementation guidelines with respect to integration that will be uniformly applicable to all regions and school districts of the province.**

4. **We recommend that all school districts in the province be afforded the resources required to enable all special needs students to learn at their full potential and to give teachers the time and assistance necessary to do their jobs well, without undue hardship.**

5. We recommend that adequate resources be provided to the Department of Education to enable school districts to supply in-service training for teachers that will equip them with the knowledge and understanding crucial to meeting the new challenges that they face in the integrated classroom.

6. We recommend that increased emphasis be placed on implementing curriculum in the school system which will foster a greater understanding of disabilities and of the special challenges faced by disabled persons, and to create harmony and friendship between all students.

7. We recommend that the Department of Education work in conjunction with interested groups in a leadership role to develop a program to foster awareness and understanding within the community of the importance of integration and its success within the New Brunswick school system.

8. We recommend that the group of students identified as "special needs" be better defined and that emphasis be placed on insuring that gifted and learning disabled students are not overlooked.

VI - EMPLOYMENT

1. Unemployment figures for youth are generally double those for the general population. The Youth Employment Strategy currently being developed by the provincial government is a welcome effort but until the program is in place, we cannot judge its success. **We recommend that energies continue to be concentrated on finding a solution to the problem of youth unemployment and that areas such as apprenticeship, job entry and work/study programs be further studied and promoted. We also recommend that the particular needs of native people and of other minorities not be ignored.**

2. Young people under 19 often have difficulty in finding summer employment because of the preference shown by employers for university and other post-secondary students. This creates a vicious circle as they are later turned down for positions because of their lack of experience. **We recommend that summer employment programs be created specifically for the 16-19 age group to assist them in acquiring job skills.**

3. **It is recommended that prior to their leaving care, and on an ongoing basis, each youth in care receive in depth independent living preparation including: social/interpersonal skills training; practical life skills training; completion of high school or G.E.D.; employment search skills.** Additionally, it would be important to establish familiarity with community support systems and community social agencies in order that the youth have a network through which they might find assistance independently.

VII - LEGISLATION / POLICY

THE MEECH LAKE ACCORD AND ITS RAMIFICATIONS FOR YOUTH: the position of the Youth Council of New Brunswick concerning the 1987 Constitutional Accord - June 1988, presented to the Select Committee on the 1987 Constitutional Accord.

1. The Youth Council of New Brunswick is concerned with the implications the Meech Lake Accord could have for the province's youth and intends to further research the issue. We fully endorse the Premier in his efforts to insure that the rights of women and minority groups are included in the Accord. **The Council recommends that the appropriate amendments be made to the 1987 Constitutional Accord to insure that these be protected.**

2. **We recommend that Clause 16 or the Accord be deleted and that a clause be added stating that nothing shall derogate or abrogate from the rights guaranteed in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.**

3. **We recommend that provisions be made in the Constitutional Accord recognizing the equal status of both official languages in New Brunswick, and the New Brunswick legislature's role in promoting and protecting the French language community in the Province.**

4. **We recommend that to insure a minimum standard of services be guaranteed to all Canadians in the area of national shared-cost programs, the terms national objectives be amended to read: national standards and objectives.**

VIII - GENERAL

1. **The Council recommends that the New Brunswick government seriously consider and act upon those recommendations made in the 1986 report of the Special Senate Committee on Youth headed by the Honourable Jacques Hébert: Youth: a Plan of Action, that relate to provincial jurisdiction. We also recommend that the federal government be encouraged to do the same with regards to federal interests and jurisdictions.**

IX - NATIVE AND ABORIGINAL YOUTH

1. **Native and aboriginal youth in New Brunswick face particular hardships; they suffer higher unemployment rates, greater substance abuse problems and often, a lower standard of living than do other sectors of our population.** Solutions must be found to these problems. We recognize the difficulties presented by the complex division of powers and responsibilities between provincial/federal and band governments but **we urge the New Brunswick government in participation with native and aboriginal youth to undertake to assist in the development and implementation of programs to alleviate the severity of the situation.**

X - YOUTH INVOLVEMENT

1. Youth strongly feel the need to be involved in decision making on matters of concern to them. **We recommend that government promote the appointment of youth to serve on interdepartmental committees, hiring boards, school boards, municipal councils, advisory committees and councils, and other decision making bodies, particularly with respect to matters such as educational reform, employment strategies, social programs, and recreation programs.**

2. The Council recognizes the need for an increase in and improvement of services to youth. However, youth are very often unaware of those services and programs that do exist. **We recommend that measures be taken to make youth better aware of the services and programs available to them (i.e. career and emotional counselling, emergency shelters, transition houses, employment opportunities, etc...). A directory of "Youth Services" made available to youth and youth organizations could be a useful tool for the dissemination of information.**

XI - TRANSPORTATION

1. We recommend that rail service in New Brunswick be increased in order to restore the level of service to that existing prior to recent federal government cuts.

2. We recommend that the provincial and federal governments develop a joint policy to eliminate monopoly of services in the transportation industry.

3. We recommend the establishment of a permanent multipartite regulatory commission to control the transportation industry in New Brunswick with the inclusion of provincial, federal government representatives as well as the public sector.

4. We recommend that this commission have full jurisdiction with respect to issues of monopoly, control, pricing, and private transportation services in New Brunswick.

5. We recommend that the present tendency towards privatisation of Crown Corporation with respect to transportation cease in order to preserve universality of access to transportation services.

6. We recommend that the provincial and federal governments develop a catch up plan in isolated regions.

7. We also recommend the creation of a comprehensive policy of subsidisation for commercial transportation companies in disadvantaged regions.

8. We recommend the gradual elimination of chip seal roads and poor quality asphalt in New Brunswick, as well as a monumental reconstruction effort of the road network.

9. We recommend the construction of a multi-lane highway in New Brunswick and the pursuit of other agreements with the federal government in order to enable the province to better serve the needs of uncentral regions.